

## From the AKC Standard

### General Appearance

The Canaan Dog is a herding and flock guardian native to the Middle East. He is aloof with strangers, inquisitive, loyal, and loving with family. His medium-size, square body is without extremes, showing a lean, sharp outline. The Canaan Dog moves with athletic agility and grace in a quick, brisk, ground-covering trot. He has a wedge-shaped head with low-set erect ears, a bushy tail that curls over the back when excited, and a straight, harsh, flat-lying double coat.



**Size** - Height at the withers is 20 to 24 inches for dogs and 19 to 23 inches for bitches. The ideal Canaan Dog lies in the middle of the stated ranges.

**Disqualifications** - Dogs less than 20" or more than 25 inches. Bitches less than 18" or more than 23 inches.

**Proportion** - Square when measured from the point of the withers to the base of the tail and from the point of the withers to the ground.

**Substance** - Moderate. Dogs generally weigh 45 to 55 pounds and bitches approximately 35 to 45

pounds. Dogs distinctly masculine without coarseness, bitches feminine without over-refinement.

#### **Color - There are two color patterns**

1) Predominately white with colored mask and with or without additional patches of color (large body patches are desirable).

2) Solid colored with or without white trim. Color may range from black through all shades of brown - sandy to red or liver. Shadings of black on a solid brown or tan dog are frequently seen. The trim on a solid colored dog may include chest, undercarriage, feet and lower part of leg and tip of tail. In all color patterns self-ticking may be present.

**Disqualifications** - Gray, brindle, all white

### Canaan Dog History



The Canaan Dog is the only breed that originated in Israel. 4000-year-old Middle-Eastern drawings depict dogs very similar to the Canaan Dog of today.

Some scientists believe the dogs originally evolved from the wolves of the Middle East, adapting characteristics to help them survive better in desert conditions.

The parents of the modern breed were Drs. Rudolphina and Rudolph Menzel. In the 1930's, they cultivated wild and semi-wild pariah dogs to create a

highly trainable breed of dog with the pariah's hardiness, adaptability, acute senses and intelligence.

The Menzels trained Canaan Dogs for mine detection, and as sentries, messengers, and Red Cross dogs who proved invaluable to the Middle East Allied Forces during World War II. The dogs continued their work during the Israeli War of Independence.

Later some Canaan Dogs were trained to lead the blind at the first institute for the blind in the Middle East, founded by Dr. Rudolphina Menzel.

Today, there are about 1000 Canaan Dogs in the United States, 400 in Israel, and 200 in the rest of the world (estimation).

The Canaan Dog became part of the Herding Group of the American Kennel Club on August 12, 1997.

Canaan Dogs in the United States today compete in conformation, herding, agility, obedience, and tracking. But most are beloved family pets!



### Some Canaan Dog Characteristics

A Canaan Dog is a wonderful, sensitive animal, often highly attuned to the moods of its humans.

It is closer to the wild than most breeds, affording humans fascinating glimpses into natural dog behavior. This means we must be more careful and creative in our training methods than with some long-domesticated breeds.

This is not the breed for everyone. Canaan Dogs are highly intelligent, and become very devoted to their family--their "pack"--so a family needs to be willing to make a life-time commitment to the dog.



Because of their pariah dog ancestry, they need to be well socialized with many people and other dogs as puppies, or they will be loyal to their family but wary of other people and dogs.

Canaan Dogs do not thrive if forced to live away from the family, with little attention. If they feel like a member of the family, most will be extremely loving, and protective of their "pack."

The Canaan Dog is an alert watchdog, but not an indiscriminate barker. It barks only when it senses something unusual in its territory. However its "territory" can encompass a large area...think of the dog's native desert home.



---

For more information please contact:

Kelly Riggs  
CDCA Representative  
Email: [asyndeton@earthlink.net](mailto:asyndeton@earthlink.net)

Cynthia Grupp  
CDCA Representative  
Telephone: (707) 226-3353

Cynthia Dodson  
Secretary & Membership Chair  
203 Noland St.  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
Email: [c.dodson@starpower.net](mailto:c.dodson@starpower.net)

Website: <http://www.cdca.org>

---

This publication is edited by:  
Renee Donaher  
CDCA Public Education Chair  
Email: [renegade.cd@cox.net](mailto:renegade.cd@cox.net)



The Canaan Dog Club of America (CDCA) is a non-profit organization whose primary objective is to encourage and promote the breeding of purebred Canaan Dogs and to do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection. The CDCA was formed in 1965 with the arrival of the first four Canaan Dogs to the United States.